

# HOW TO KILL A TREE

Few residential trees die of “old age.” Mechanical damage and improper tree care kill more trees than any pests or disease. **AVOID** making these harmful mistakes and consider hiring a certified arborist to perform advanced tree care.



- 1 “Top” your tree to encourage weak watersprouts
- 2 Leave codominant leaders with included bark that split during winds and storms
- 3 Plant close to house or obstacle to reduce adequate growing space
- 4 Leave “stubs” when pruning to promote branch decay
- 5 Leave crossing branches when pruning to rub bark wounds
- 6 Ignore pests, diseases, and nutrient deficiencies
- 7 Nail or attach items to tree to damage bark and girdle branches
- 8 Encourage pests by leaving broken branches on the tree
- 9 Coat pruning cuts with paint or sealer to slow wound closure
- 10 Cut large branches flush with the trunk to increase decay
- 11 Damage roots and trunk with lawn equipment
- 12 Spray herbicides on turf that accidentally poison tree
- 13 Cut through roots when digging trenches
- 14 Encourage rot and hinder tree growth by leaving wrap on trunk
- 15 Leave tree staked until guy wire girdles trunk
- 16 Pile mulch against the trunk to encourage rodent damage and bark rot
- 17 Prevent water and nutrients from reaching the roots by covering the soil with a plastic weed barrier
- 18 Leave root ball twine on to girdle the trunk
- 19 Leave wire basket in place to girdle roots
- 20 Leave on treated or synthetic burlap to prevent root growth
- 21 Leave circling roots that will strangle the tree
- 22 Dig planting hole too narrow and overamend backfill to discourage proper root spread
- 23 Dig hole too deep to smother the trunk flare and drown the roots
- 24 Drown the roots by over-irrigating your lawn

